

INFANT DEATHS, FETAL DEATHS, AND ABORTIONS

INFANT DEATHS

In 2011, there were 30 resident infant deaths, which equates to a rate of 4.9 infant deaths per 1,000 live births. This is a slight increase from the rate in 2010 of 4.2 per 1,000 live births. This rate is lower than the 2010 U.S. rate of 6.2. The Vermont infant mortality rate steadily declined from 24.0 in 1960 to 5.8 per 1,000 live births in 1991. Over the past two decades the rate has fluctuated between a high of 7.4 in 1994 and a low of 4.2 in 2010. ([Table A-1](#))

Twenty-one (70 percent) of the infant deaths occurred during the neonatal period, that is before the infant became 28 days old ([Table D-6](#)). The neonatal death rate was 3.5 deaths per 1,000 live births ([Table D-5](#)), equal to the 2010 U.S. neonatal death rate of 3.5. The Vermont neonatal death rate decreased from 18.6 in 1960, to 14.4 in 1970, to 6.2 in 1980, to 3.6 in 1990 ([Table A-1](#)), then followed an increasing trend through the nineties to a high of 5.9 in 1998. The rate has fluctuated throughout this decade.

One of the most important risk factors in infant mortality is low birth weight ([Table D-7](#)). Of resident infants who died in 2011, 66.7 percent had a birth weight less than 2500 grams (5 pounds 8 ounces), while 6.7 percent of all resident births were low birth weight. The infant mortality rate for low weight births was 41.8 deaths per 1,000 live births. Age of mother is also related to infant mortality ([Table D-5](#)), with the highest rates typically seen in the younger age groups. The infant mortality rate for mothers 20 through 24 years of age was 5.6, and for mothers age 25 through 29 the rate was 6.2 for 2009 through 2011. The 35 to 39 year old maternal age group had the highest neonatal death rate at 4.7.

FETAL DEATHS

Unlike births and deaths, reports of fetal deaths and abortions are not shared among states. Therefore, statistics concerning these events reflect occurrences in Vermont only and do not include Vermont resident fetal deaths and abortions that occurred in other states.

There were 19 resident fetal deaths in 2011 ([Table D-1](#)) for a rate of 3.1 per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths, down from 3.7 per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths in 2010 ([Table D-5](#)). Of the fetal deaths in Vermont, 13 weighed less than 2500 grams ([Table D-7](#)). From 2009 to 2011, the fetal death rate was highest in the 15 to 19 age group: 6.8 per 1,000 live births ([Table D-5](#)).

VERMONT ABORTIONS

There were 1355 abortions performed in Vermont in 2011, a slight increase from 1333 in 2010. Vermont residents accounted for 1274, or 94.0 percent. This represents a rate of 7.4 per 1,000 Vermont women age 15 to 44.

The abortion ratio is the number of resident abortions occurring in Vermont times 1,000, divided by the total resident live births. The abortion ratio for 2011 was 209.6 abortions per 1,000 live births, an increase from the 199.1 seen in 2010. The U.S. abortion ratio was 219 per 1,000 live births in 2011. Women age 20 to 24 had the highest *age-specific* abortion rate, of 24.3 per 1,000 women, followed by women age 25 to 29 at 17.6.

First trimester abortions (less than or equal to 12 weeks) accounted for 93.8 percent of all Vermont abortions and 70.7 percent of all Vermont abortions were for pregnancies of less than 9 weeks duration ([Table E-5](#)). See [Appendix B](#) for the method used to compute the number of weeks of gestation.